(d) what is the main reason to hike the freight rate when Government has announced cut in fuel rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) At an average lead of 1293 kms., the impact of increase in freight rate works out to 7.60 paise per kg. It is expected that this increase will be absorbed in the wholesale price and will not affect the common man.

(d) The main reason is to meet with additional financial burden caused by increase in input costs and ordinary working expenses as a result of substantial increase in Wholesale Price Index and pay package burden due to 6th Pay Commission.

Increase in freight charges due to change in category of commodities

†664.SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has recently decided that category of certain commodities be changed/from 120 to 130 from 1st February, 2009;

(b) if so, the commodities whose categories have been changed under this decision;

(c) the percentage increase in freight charges of these items that would come into effect due to this change; and

(d) the reasons for changing the categories of these commodities at this time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The commodities are (i) Chemical Manures and (ii) Foodgrains, Flours and Pulses.

(c) 8.33%.

(d) The main reason is to meet with additional financial burden caused by increase in input costs and ordinary working expenses as a result of substantial increase in Wholesale Price Index and pay package burden due to 6th Pay Commission.

Upgradation of reservation counter at Press Club

665. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is thinking of upgrading the Press Club reservation counter, New Delhi, for reason that it is always crowded; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) An analysis of the reservation requests being dealt with at Reservation centre at Press Club has revealed that the same does not justify opening of additional window at this reservation counter.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.